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Director of Finance

OPTIONAL FORM 41 (Rev. 7-76)

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1 FEB 1983

Mr. Thomas P. Wolf Director, Office of Transportation Audits General Services Administration Washington, D.C. 20405 DD/A REGISTRY.
FILE: 30-13-4

Dear Mr. Wolf:

In response to the letter from Mr. Raymond Fontaine dated 3 January 1983, on recovery of refunds for unused airline ticket coupons, our Office of Finance has again reviewed this Agency's procedures and controls for ensuring such refunds are obtained. This review confirms that existing procedures and controls should be, and in practice are, as effective as could be desired in recovery of unused ticket refunds.

In addition to the Office of Finance review in January and our ongoing concern with this matter, we have discussed Mr. Fontaine's letter with the Agency's Audit Staff. They have reviewed recent audit reports and work papers which include audits of Central Travel Branch (CTB), our sole focal point for processing unused air ticket refunds. Their audits of CTB include audit of controls and procedures, and financial audit of the two general ledger accounts used to monitor unused tickets and refunds. There have been no negative findings or exceptions in these areas of audits through September 1981. CTB is scheduled for audit this summer. The Audit Staff will pay particular attention to the ticket refund area in the 1983 audit.

The Audit Staff performs regular audits of operating components and field installations which include test audits of travel accountings and documentation where appropriate. These numerous audits should detect unused airline tickets not properly processed for refund, much as was done by the GSA review teams referred to in Mr. Fontaine's letter. No problems in this area have been identified by these audits.

For the past two years we have been very much aware of the refund recovery problem. This heightened awareness has not resulted in discovery of deficiencies in our procedures or of unrefunded tickets. In our liaison with other Federal agencies on travel matters and review of GAO reports in this field, we

have found that problems relating to refunds encountered by other agencies are not extant in our travel operations. This finding was basically confirmed by CIA representatives attending GSA's October 1982 Agency Review and Assistance Program presentation in Washington.

Our special reviews and regular audits indicate that further searches for unused airline tickets would not be cost effective. We will continue to monitor our ticket refund procedures and controls, and the results obtained. To date the results of this program have been highly satisfactory.

Sincerely,

Harry E. Fitzwater

Harry E. Fitzwater
Deputy Director
for
Administration

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